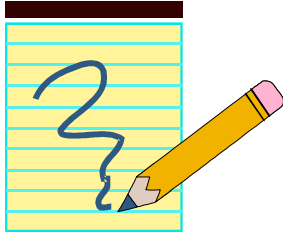


RURAL FIRE PREVENTION CHECKLIST



Self-reliance is the rule for fire safety for many people. If you live in an area where the local fire department is more than a few minutes away because of travel time or distance, or if you are outside the limits of the nearest town, be sure you know how to be self-reliant in a fire emergency.

Maintain Home Heating Systems

- ◆ Have your chimney inspected and cleaned annually by a certified specialist.
- ◆ Insulate chimneys and place spark arresters on top.
- ◆ Extend the chimney at least three feet above the roof.
- ◆ Remove branches hanging above and around the chimney.

Have a Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan

- ◆ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home.
- ◆ Test them monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.
- ◆ Practice fire escape and evacuation plans.
- ◆ Mark the entrance to your property with signs that are clearly visible.
- ◆ Know which local emergency services are available and have those numbers posted.
- ◆ Provide emergency vehicle access through roads and driveways at least 12 feet wide with adequate turnaround space.

Make your Home Fire-Resistant

- ◆ Use fire-resistant and protective roofing and materials like stone, brick and metal to protect your home. Avoid using wood materials that offer the least fire protection.
- ◆ Keep roofs and eaves clear of debris.

- ◆ Cover all exterior vents, attics and eaves with metal mesh screens no larger than 6 millimeters.
- ◆ Install multipane windows, tempered safety glass or fireproof shutters to protect large windows from radiant heat.
- ◆ Use fire-resistant draperies for added window protection.
- ◆ Keep tools for fire protection nearby: 100 foot garden hose, shovel, rake, ladder and buckets.
- ◆ Make sure water sources, such as hydrants and ponds, are accessible to the fire department.

Let Your Landscape Defend Your Property

- ◆ Trim grass on a regular basis up to 100 feet surrounding your home.
- ◆ Create defensible space by thinning trees and brush within 30 feet around your home.
- ◆ Beyond 30 feet, remove dead wood, debris and low tree branches.
- ◆ Landscape your property with fire resistant plants and vegetation to prevent fire from spreading quickly.
- ◆ Stack firewood at least 30 feet away from your home and other structures.
- ◆ Store flammable materials, liquids and solvents in metal containers outside the home, at least 30 feet away from structures and wooden fences.

Follow Local Burning Laws

- ◆ Do not burn trash or other debris without proper knowledge of local burning laws, techniques and the safest times of day and year to burn.
- ◆ Before burning debris in a wooded area, make sure you notify local authorities and obtain a burning permit.
- ◆ Use an approved incinerator with a safety lid or covering with holes no larger than $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
- ◆ Create at least a 10 foot clearing around the incinerator before burning debris.